



THE FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP • 2027–2028

The Fulbright Application Guide

Everything you need to apply for the Fulbright Foreign Student Scholarship from Trinidad and Tobago. Nine steps. Read them all, then work through them in order.

I won this scholarship. This guide follows the official process from the U.S. Embassy in Port of Spain (tt.usembassy.gov), with what I learned doing it myself.

Nazera Abdul-Haqq, Fulbright Scholar • @MasterCaribbeanExamsTT

BEFORE YOU START

Read all nine steps first

Then go back to Step 1 and begin. Don't open the application until you've read to the end.

THE BIG DATES

What you're racing.

APPLICATIONS OPEN	March 13, 2026
DEADLINE	June 13, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET. No late applications.
CYCLE TO SELECT	2027 / 2028
YOU'LL HEAR BACK	Shortlisted candidates contacted by September 1. Only shortlisted candidates are notified.
APPLY HERE	apply.iie.org/ffsp2027

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ELIGIBILITY

Check you qualify

Before anything else, make sure you tick every box. Miss one and the rest doesn't matter.

- You're a national of Trinidad and Tobago and hold a T&T passport.
- You're **not** a U.S. permanent resident or green card holder, and not a dual U.S./T&T citizen.
- You graduated from a local tertiary institution with a high pass (upper second or first class).
- You haven't spent a lot of recent time (past 3–5 years) living or studying in the U.S. Preference goes to people who haven't already had that chance.
- You can commit to **returning to T&T for at least two years** after you finish. The J-1 visa requires it.
- Your field is anything (master's or PhD), as long as it doesn't need clinical practice on patients or clients.

THE PIECE TO TAKE SERIOUSLY

The two-year return home is the whole point of the programme. Your application has to show you mean it.

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CHOOSE

Pick one programme

There are two graduate scholarships open, and the application link is the same for both. **You can only apply to one.**

- **Foreign Student Program.** For most applicants. A master's or PhD at a U.S. university.
- **Faculty Development Program.** For educators nominated by a T&T higher-ed institution, dedicated to university teaching.

Priority fields (all fields welcome, but these align with current development priorities): AI, machine learning and data science; computer science, information systems, cybersecurity; GIS and geospatial science; tech innovation and entrepreneurship; bioinformatics; international relations and national security; public administration, policy and economic planning; justice and legal studies; public health and health administration; non-clinical nursing education.

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OPEN IT

Start your application

Open the portal early, even before your essays are done. Seeing the form tells you exactly what's needed so nothing surprises you in the final week.

Apply at apply.iie.org/ffsp2027. When you're in, select the 2027/2028 cycle. Spell your name in English with no accents. Inside the form you'll list your schools, your awards, and (for IIE placement) up to 8 university programme preferences in order. That's where schools go, never in your essays.

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GATHER

Collect your documents

Pull these together. Some take time from other people, so start now.

- **Transcripts.** Official, certified copies from every post-secondary school, listing courses and grades. Upload copies now; sealed originals come later if you're a finalist.
- **Diplomas and degrees.** Copies of the originals. Translated to English if needed (literal translation, not interpretive).
- **CV or résumé.** Your work, education, skills, activities.
- **GRE or GMAT.** Only if you become a finalist, and only for some fields. Don't let it slow your application now.
- **Passport biodata page.** Needed later for your DS-2019 and J-1 visa.
- **Writing sample.** Required for PhD and some master's fields. 10–20 pages, your best work, in your field.

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REFERENCES

Sort your three letters

You need three letters of reference, and at least one must be from an academic who can speak to your academic potential.

THE RULE PEOPLE GET WRONG

Your referees submit their letters directly through the online application. You register them in the portal and they upload it themselves. You never collect or send the letters yourself.

- Pick people who know you well in a professional or academic capacity, not the most senior name who barely knows you.
- Choose referees who will say different things about you, so the letters cover different strengths.
- Ask them today. Send your CV and draft essays right away so they can write something specific fast.
- Follow up gently a week before the deadline.

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ESSAY 1

Write your Study Objective

This essay shows what you want to study and why you're a fit. One to two pages. In your own words: your degree objective, major field and specific interests; why you're drawn to this area; the kind of programme you expect and how it fits your background and goals; how your interests connect to challenges in T&T; how you'll apply your studies when you return.

TWO HARD RULES, AND MY NOTE

Do not name universities or faculty in this essay. One to two pages, your own words. I never named a single school in mine. Use the Essay Companion for a step-by-step structure.

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ESSAY 2

Write your Personal Statement

This is the human one. Who you are and where you're going. One to two pages. In your own words: who you are, what matters to you, what you want to accomplish; your unique qualifications for your field; the experiences, people and events that pushed you toward this path; your commitment to the field, the contribution you want to make, and what you'll do with the degree.

SAME RULES

No universities or faculty named. One to two pages. Every word your own. The Essay Companion walks you through this one too.

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DON'T GET CUT

Stay on the right side of plagiarism

Fulbright has a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy. Plagiarism anywhere in your application disqualifies you. Take this seriously.

- Write every word yourself. Having someone else write your essay, even a small part, counts as plagiarism.
- If you use anyone's words, ideas, statistics, or images, cite them, even if you paraphrase. Use APA, MLA, or Chicago.
- Quoting word-for-word? Use quotation marks and cite. Avoid quotes of 40+ words.
- When in doubt, cite. There's nothing wrong with citations.

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SEND IT

Submit early, then the finalist stage

Submit on the portal with time to spare, not on the final night. Uploads fail, sites slow down, don't let that be your story.

If you're shortlisted (by Sept 1):

- You'll sit the GRE or GMAT (by field) before September 1.
- Your university emails sealed official transcripts straight to the Fulbright Office (POS-exchange@state.gov, Attn: Kervelle Durant-Julien).
- Watch your email. Only shortlisted candidates are contacted.

ONE LAST THING

The hardest part of Fulbright is deciding you are allowed to want it. A lot of strong people talk themselves out before they open the form. Don't do that to yourself. Apply, and let the committee decide.

BEFORE YOU HIT SUBMIT

Your checklist

- ☐ I meet every eligibility rule, including the two-year return
- ☐ I picked ONE programme (FSP or FDP)
- ☐ Application opened on apply.iie.org/ffsp2027, 2027/2028 cycle selected
- ☐ Transcripts, diplomas, CV gathered (translated if needed)
- ☐ Three referees registered in the portal, at least one academic
- ☐ Study Objective written, no schools named, 1–2 pages, my own words
- ☐ Personal Statement written, no schools named, 1–2 pages, my own words
- ☐ Everything cited where needed, nothing copied
- ☐ Submitted with time to spare